



**Agriculture
and Markets**

Community Gardens Task Force

Meeting II Discussion Guide

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Richard A. Ball
Commissioner

Discussion Part I

Question and Answer

- What resources do you think would facilitate better collaboration with local food assistance programs and food banks?
 - What resources would help you expand and/or establish community gardens located in 'food deserts' or in areas that are nutritionally insecure?

Question and Answer

- For community gardens: Do you currently have after-school programs in operation?
 - If yes, what resources would help you maintain and expand these programs?
 - If no, what do you believe would help you establish after-school programs?

Question and Answer

- What barriers do you face when increasing opportunities for seniors or older adults (60+ years of age) to participate in community gardens and intergenerational programming?

Question and Answer

- What barriers do you face when encouraging healthier lifestyles and wellness, particularly in relation to adult and childhood obesity?

Question and Answer

- What solutions would help you encourage healthier lifestyles (i.e., information sharing, cooking and nutrition classes, food preservation workshops, gardening workshops, affordable access after growing season, etc.)?

Question and Answer

- What solutions are inclusive to all ages, demographics, and cultural relevancies?

Discussion Part II

Discussion Part II

We will review the list of top challenges identified at the end of the last meeting and come to a consensus on actionable solutions that will equitably impact entities across New York State.

Challenge: Lack of Knowledge Sharing

1. Solution: Qualitative and quantitative research including studies to capture the environmental and social benefits of community gardens (reduced crime, community building, reduced heat island effect, etc.) to educate and inform policy makers, funders, and community partners.

a. What would this look like?

a. What are barriers to success and resources necessary for long term sustainability?



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Challenge: Lack of Knowledge Sharing

2. Solution: Implement state organized opportunities for knowledge sharing outside of one's own jurisdiction.

a. What would this look like?

b. What are barriers to success and resources necessary for long term sustainability?

Challenge: Lack of Knowledge Sharing

3. Solution: Initiate training and educational opportunities for gardeners.

a. What would this look like?

b. What are barriers to success and resources necessary for long term sustainability?

Challenge: Lack of Coordination

1. **Solution:** Better collaboration between community gardens and State entities
 - a. **What would this look like?** Memorandums of understanding to ensure long term availability of resources. Adapt zoning codes. Right to Farm Law (RTF) in urban areas. Designate community gardens as critical environmental areas that are legally protected.
 - b. **What are barriers to success and resources necessary for long term sustainability?**

Challenge: Lack of Coordination

2. Solution: Provide a central resource for community gardens that outlines available entrepreneurial programs, for-profit ventures, cooperatives, and collaborative initiatives where small gardens can work together to pool resources and build upon market share.

a. What would this look like?

b. What are barriers to success and resources necessary for long term sustainability?

Challenge: Lack of Resources

1. Solution: Ensure community gardens maintain long term control over land so that it is worthwhile for gardeners to invest in their land and infrastructure.

a. What would this look like?

b. What are barriers to success and resources necessary for long term sustainability?

Challenge: Lack of Resources

2. Solution: Provide educational resources to maximize environmental resources (i.e., how fire hydrants might be used as a water source, the use of composting to mitigate the stress of drought and enhance soil health, how to access free soil testing, etc.).

a. What would this look like?

b. What are barriers to success and resources necessary for long term sustainability?

Challenge: Lack of Resources

3. **Solution:** Facilitate formal relationships between stakeholders to enable resource sharing.
 - a. **What would this look like?** Connect food banks and non-profits that can offer technical assistance regarding community gardens in exchange for food, seeds and volunteer support.
 - b. **What are barriers to success and resources necessary for long term sustainability?**

Challenge: Lack of Resources

4. Solution: Make grant funding more accessible.

a. What would this look like? Mini grants, provide grant training and support.

b. What are barriers to success and resources necessary for long term sustainability?

Challenge: Lack of Staff

1. **Solution:** Capacity Building

a. What would this look like? Establish inter-generational gardening opportunities that bridge the gap between the aging gardener population and interested youth. This should include accessible gardening for older adults and people with disabilities who want to volunteer but are currently unable.

b. What are barriers to success and resources necessary for long term sustainability?

Challenge: Lack of Staff

2. **Solution:** Encourage for-profit and fundraising opportunities for community gardens to support income for staff.

a. What would this look like?

b. What are barriers to success and resources necessary for long term sustainability?

Thank you!